



South Washington County Schools

Guiding Principles of Literacy Instruction

Teaching and learning in South Washington County Schools includes the following principles as they relate to Literacy Instruction:

- Literacy begins in the home culture; therefore, classroom instruction must reflect the home culture.
- Early intervention and timely instruction are essential to build a foundation for literacy success.
- All students will become successful independent readers, writers, listeners, and speakers.
- Daily instructional decisions will be based on the developmental needs of individual students using best practices – “not a one size fits all” approach.
- Standards based curriculum is a key component of our literacy instruction.
- Quality, trained teachers are more effective than any program.
- A strong literacy focus will be embedded into all content areas.
- The purpose, use and understanding of literacy varies from culture to culture.
- Multicultural perspectives are an essential part of instructional practice.
- Teachers use a variety of assessment data to guide instruction and/or measure student growth.
- Teachers must use frequent formative assessments to make instructional decisions.
- All students will have access to high interest books that they are able to read.
- Beginning readers and writers need explicit instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics. Later, this instruction extends to word analysis, spelling, and language conventions.
- Rigorous academic instruction will be provided for students at all levels to ensure individual student growth.
- Effective instruction develops strategic readers who construct meaning using a variety of strategies, cueing systems, and skills.
- Multiple purposes for writing must be explicitly taught.
- Students will be given regular opportunities to participate in the writing process and read samples written by others as they produce their own pieces of writing.
- A combination of teacher and student choice is most effective for student learning.
- Sustained and purposeful independent reading must be a part of each academic day, an essential ingredient for student growth.
- Reading a text multiple times can deepen understanding.
- Teachers will promote a love of reading and writing for students.
- Overall curriculum framework will be consistent across the district; however, flexibility in instruction is encouraged.
- Once children learn to read, reading to learn becomes an essential instructional component across the curriculum.
- Technology will be used to enhance the learning opportunities for all learners.
- The preferred instructional model for teaching literacy is inclusive, collaborative, and interactive.
- In order to close achievement gaps, it is important to accelerate student growth beyond a typical one year growth target.
- Digital literacies will be embedded in effective instructional practice.